

Great Lakes Pathologists, S.C. Strengthens Finances and Improves Management Reporting

At a Glance

Organization

Great Lakes Pathologists, S.C.
Milwaukee, Wis.

- 12 hospitals
- 100 clinics
- 43 physicians

Solution Spotlight

- McKesson Practice Consulting Solutions
- McKesson Revenue Management Solutions

Critical Issues

- Lack of electronic interfaces with hospital clients
- Need to bill for professional services
- Coding and compliance issues
- Need for effective audits

Results

- Consistent revenues
- Effective capture of professional services fees
- Detailed management reports

Great Lakes Pathologists, S.C., a 43-physician, pathology powerhouse serving 12 hospitals and 100 clinics throughout eastern Wisconsin, relied on a local medical billing service to manage its billing processes. When service problems with the vendor began to multiply and severely affect finances, the practice knew it had to make changes. As a regional pathology leader providing medical direction for the largest clinical laboratory in the state, the practice required a leading medical billing service provider, which it found in McKesson. After Great Lakes partnered with McKesson, it became more financially stable than ever before.

Challenges

Great Lakes' reliance on a local medical billing vendor led to major financial problems. The vendor lacked pathology billing expertise and was dependent on a paper-based coding and claims system. In addition, the local company didn't have an electronic interface with the group's hospital clients. These deficiencies hindered effective audits and allowed many charges to slip through the cracks. The vendor also was incapable of billing for professional services and was not providing timely and useful management reports.

Answers

Jim Clark, M.D., president of Great Lakes, says the decision to shift to McKesson was driven largely by the company's demonstrated competence and experience in medical billing services for pathology. "We were a little bit nervous about using a company that was based out of state, but the fact that pathology is a core area of expertise for McKesson helped us overcome those concerns," says Clark.

Ahead of the transition date, McKesson developed robust interfaces for all Great Lakes' facilities and also completed extensive testing of the practice's personnel. McKesson's software allowed for efficient billing and collections, while its processes minimized compliance risk.

Results

The changeover to McKesson was exceptionally smooth, according to Clark. As a result, no significant interface problems were experienced during the go-live. "It quickly became apparent that McKesson had a much greater understanding of pathology billing issues and the complexities of clinical component billing than did any of its competitors," he adds.

Case Study

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Jim Clark, M.D.

President

Great Lakes Pathologists

With McKesson in charge of revenue cycle management, Great Lakes' revenue stream quickly stabilized and billing procedures began to improve. According to Clark, McKesson has been particularly successful at billing for the professional component of pathology services. "Our revenue stream is more consistent, and our billing process has had continuous improvement since McKesson came on board," he explains. "We are extremely pleased with the company's performance."

He reports, too, that the McKesson staff members are extremely responsive in addressing ongoing operational issues or coding questions. "Whenever we identify what appears to be an issue, it gets resolved very quickly," Clark says. "They are very professional and a lot of fun to work with. We couldn't be happier with the way this has worked out."

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